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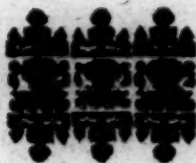
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IOHN LING,

To the 16. Quæres of Ioseph Heming,
about CHRISTMAS.

Wherein all the care that can be is ta-
ken to avoyd expence of paper, so much ha-
ving beene spoyled already. For

*Wer's not for Christmas which is nigh,
When fruit, spice, eaten and digested Pie
Calls for more paper, no man could make shift
How to employ JOs. HEMING to his thrift.*



Printed in the Yeare 1643.

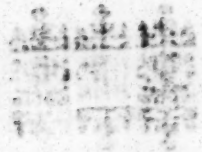
A. H. H. H.

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about 1000

Volume 10 of the series

It is for more paper, no more could be kept
in the first. It is, even and light for
the first. It is, even and light for



Printed in the Year 1843.



*A short Answer of Iohn Ling to the 16.
Quæres of Ioseph Heming about Christmas.*



It is perceived that one *Ioseph Heming*, not long before Christmas, 1648. (as by his printed Paper doth appeare) from his Study in *Ussaxeter*, otherwise and vulgarly *Uxter*, in the sayd yeare doth challenge all those who can write and reade, to answer his 16. Quæries concerning the observation of the Feast of Christmas, or the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ; to which

I *Iohn Ling* having been a Grammer Schollar, and having seene somewhat in the world both in this Church, and the Reformed beyond Sea, doe make this Answer.

The first Quære.

Whether such religious customes as are binding to all the Churches of Iesus Christ, ought not to have sure footing upon the Word of God, or Apostolicall practice?

Resp. Because I will not make Paper deare by long Answers or Recitalls, I say such Religious Customes as are binding to all the Churches of Iesus Christ, ought to have footing upon the word of God, or Apostolicall practice.

The second Quære.

Whether you can substantially prove that Christ was borne on the 25 of December? And what your proofes are?

A 2

Resp.

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Resp. It is not materiall, I, or no, whether I can prove that Christ was borne on the 25 of *December*, as it now standeth in the English Calendar.

The third Quære.

Whether the celebration of that day (grant he was borne on it) can be clearely warranted by you from Scripture? And what your Scriptures are?

Resp. It imports no more then what is answered in the first and second.

The fourth Quære.

Whether you can cleare it by sound consequence from the New Testament, though not set downe there in totidem verbis?

Resp. It is cleared by sound consequence, both from the Old and New Testament, that the day of the Birth of our Saviour, God and man, should be kept with Festivity: I will now first give you instance in the Angels song to the Shepherds, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men*, see the 118 Psalme, 22. 23. and 24. verses, *The stone which the builders refused is the head of the corner*, which is interpreted in the New Testament to be meant of Christ. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, wee will rejoyce and be glad in it*, which all good Interpreters say to be meant by the day of the Birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus-Christ. Many places there are in *Isaiah*, and other of the Prophets: So that now you have better proofes from Scripture for keeping holy an Anniverfary day for the celebration of the Birth of our Lord, then for changing the Sabbath to the Lords day; the proofes whereof are chiefly groundd upon Apostolicall Custome, *Isaiah*, 28. 16. *Math.* 21. 42. *Acts*, 4. 11. *Rom.* 9. 33. *1 Peter*, 2. 6. and 7.

The fifth Quære.

Whether you can doe it by universall tradition?

Resp.

Resp. Its done by Universall Tradition, and in that I will bring it to the Customary Practice of the Reformed Churches of Dutch, French, and Geneva.

The sixt Quære.

Whether (in case it can be evidenced by none of these, viz. plaine Text, solid Inference, universall Tradition) it be not a meere humane invention, and so Will worship? And how you will one day acquit yourselves before God, for placing, and crying up mens Inventions, instead of the institutions of Iesus Christ? And whether it were not faithfull dealing with poore simple people to tell them that you have neither of these to warrant it?

Resp. I answer, it were false dealing to tell Christian People that which were untrue.

The seaventh Quære.

(Since dayes and times commanded by God himselfe to be observed under the Law, were, and are unlawfull under the Gospel) Whether dayes and times commanded by men, and not by God, under the Gospel, are not lesse lawfull?

Resp. If this day and time were onely commanded by men, it were unlawfull, so far as to command it as a meere Religious duty.

The eighth Quære.

Whether the true and gennine Interpretation of Christmas be Christ man? And whether to perswade people 'tis so, be not to abuse and delude them? And whether we may not as well interpret Candlemas Candleman, Michaelmas Michaelman, as Christmas Christman?

Resp. (Because you make sport, and have brought in a Gamboll)

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That I have a conjecture that *Joseph Fleming* is some Schoole Master ; or some great Schoole Boy ; that can interpret the Latine *Mas* for a man , and then Christmas is Christman ; and certainly it is to abuse people to perswade them so and so of the rest : But I have heard what was answered Dr. *Lambe* by a good fellow , to whom he objected to have sayd Christyde, and why not as well *Tom* tyde ? The Answer was he could say *Christmas*, or *Thomas*, or *Lambe*, asse , and so he left him, and so doe I you with your Gamboll.

The ninth Quære.

Whether the Saints are bound to rejoyce in the Birth of Christ on that day men superstitiously call Christmas , more then at other times ? And whether the Lords day be not [the] day appointed for them to rejoyce on ?

Resp. You begge the Question of Superstition , and so untill you frame the Argument out of the Question in Moode and Figure , I shall answer you no more upon that poynt.

The tenth Quære.

Whether Christmas day ought in any respect to be esteemed above another of the Weake dayes ? And whether people may not without offence to God follow their lawfull vocations on that day ?

Resp. That by the established Lawes of this Kingdome , in the times of the first Reformation (and still continued) this is commanded to be kept as a holy day.

The eleaventh Quære.

Whether you thinke the Parliaments and Assembly have erred and played the fooles in condemning and raising out Holy dayes not warranted in the Word ? And whether to observe them , be not highly to dislike, and flatly to contradict (in poynt of practice at least) their proceedings in order to a Reformation ?

Resp.

Resp. I say it is a Proposition of ill language, and therefore I say no more, but demand of you whether you thinke the first Reformers that suffered Martyrdom were Fooles and Knaves?

The twelfth Quære.

Whether (since most men and women in England doe blindly and superstitiously beleve Christ was borne that day) preaching on it, doth not nourish and strengthen them in that believe?

Resp. At first you begge the Question, but to the second part of it; I say since preaching is lawfull upon any day; so is it expedient, if not necessary upon a day commanded.

The thirteenth Quære.

Whether this Feast had not its rise and growth from Christians conformity to the mad Feasts Saturnalia (kept in December to Saturne the Father of Gods) in which there was a sheafe offered to Ceres Goddesse of Corne, a hymne in her praise called Yaul or Yule? And whether those Christians by name, to eluake it, did not afterwards call it Yule; and Christmas (as though it were for Christs honour?) And whether it be not yet by some (more ancient then truly or knowingly religious) called Yule, and the mad playes (wherewith'tis celebrated like those Saturnalia) Yule games? And whether from the offering of that Sheafe to Ceres; from that song in her praise; from those gifts the Heathens gave their friends in the Calends of January, ominis gratia; did not arise or spring our blazes; Christmas Kirtles, and New yeares gifts?

Resp. Whether this Feast had not its Rise from Christians conformity to the mad Feast Saturnalia, I answer, I thinke it a very mad Question: But I confesse in some Nations they call that Feast Yule; and amongst your brethren the Scots, they call it Zule, as I have found it in their Callenders; but till you can prove that those Na-
tions

tions speake Greeke, you will be far to seeke for your Argument : Therefore good Mr. Schoolemaster, or Schooleboy, leave off your Etymologies ; for you will finde it hard to prove that Christians used to celebrate this Feast in any relation to the *Saturnalia* or *Ceres* Songs.

The fourteenth Quære.

Whether conformity to, and retention of Heathenish Customes be commendable in Christians, sutable or agreeable with Gospel Principles, though under pretext of Christs Honour and Worships?

Resp. In the Negative it is not lawfull ; but how will you apply it, John Ellis, I cry you mercy Joseph Hemming?

The fifteenth Quære.

Whether you are not bound to prove your practice for the conviction and satisfaction of your Brethren, whose duty it is to walke with you in things agreeable to the minde of Christ? And in case you cannot; Whether you ought not to acknowledge your error, lay downe your practice (as others have done theirs) no longer befooling and misleading the people committed to your charge?

I answer, this reproofe would serve for a Preacher if he had misled his people, of which number I am not, but if this charge be unjust, see how you disobey the Lawes of God and man.

The sixteenth Quære.

Whether in case you returne no Answer to these Quæries, I have not ground sufficient to conclude you utterly unable to give any rationall account of your practice, now put upon it?

Resp. Whether I have answered your Quæries or no; Let me know it by your confession or Reply.

From no great Study, this 23 of Dec. 1648.

F I N I S.